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6-2021

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# Do Compassion Rounds Improve Professional Quality of Life for RNs?

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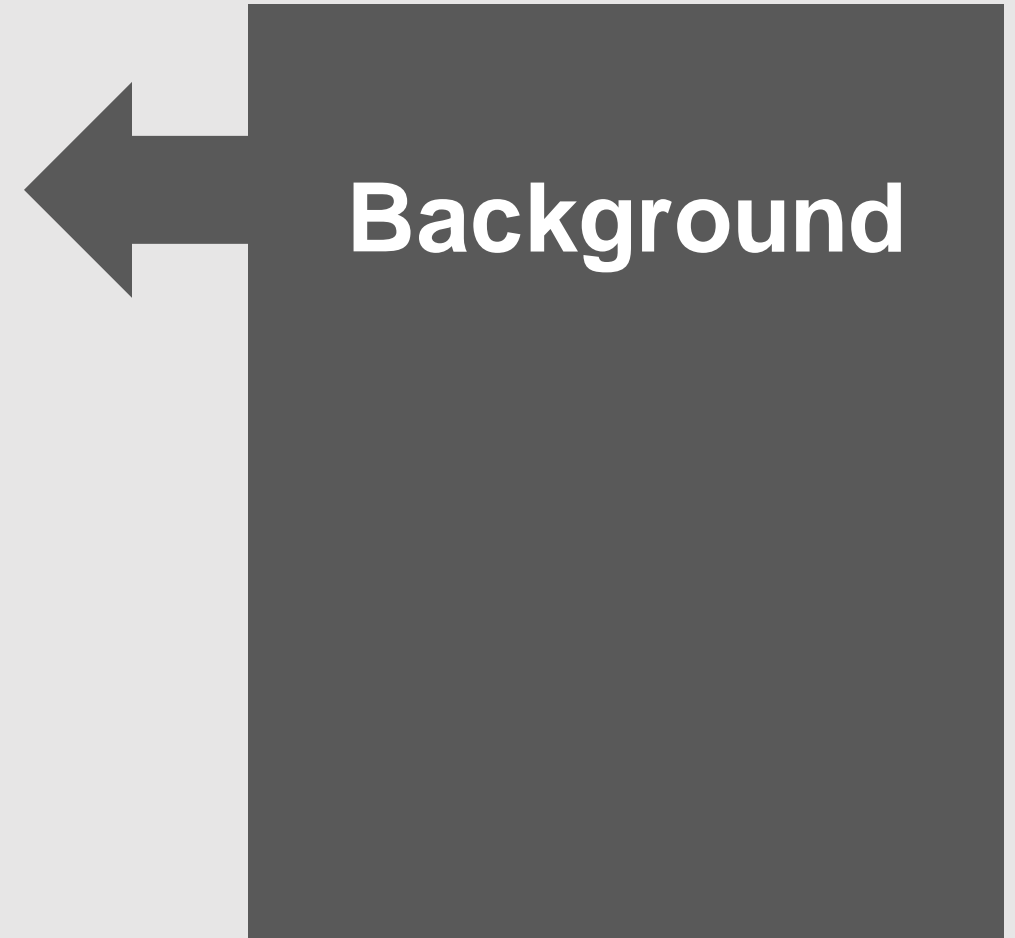
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**Martha E.F. Highfield PhD RN**

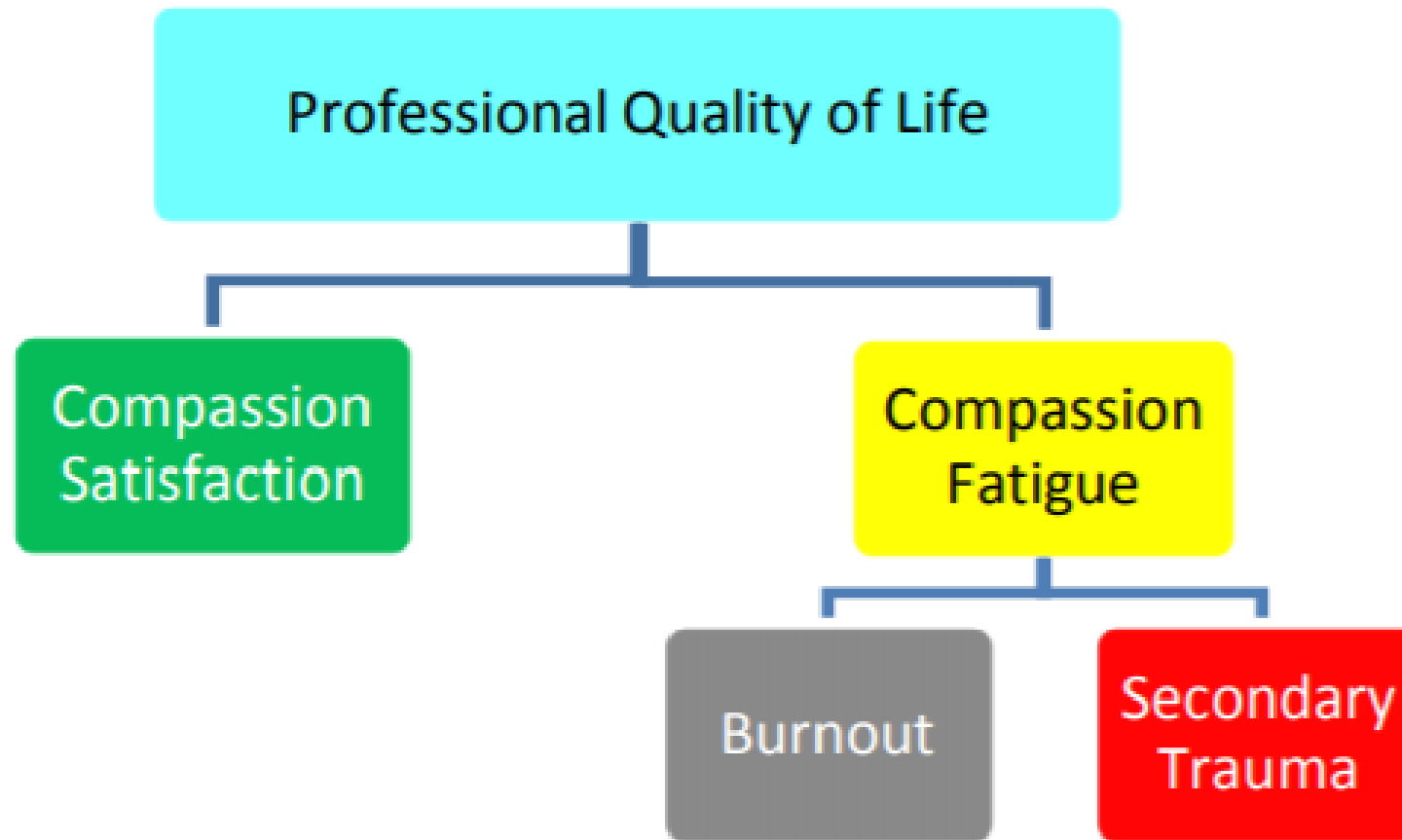
## RN professional quality of life (QOL) is

*How RNs feel about their role as helper*

- *Positive* RN QOL = *Positive* RN & patient outcomes (e.g., RN retention & patient satisfaction)
- *Negative* RN QOL = *Negative* RN & patient outcomes (e.g., RN disengagement & errors)
- RN professional QOL challenged by high acuity patient care as in units that are part of critical care continuum.
- Progressive care units on this continuum



# Framework: Professional Quality of Life



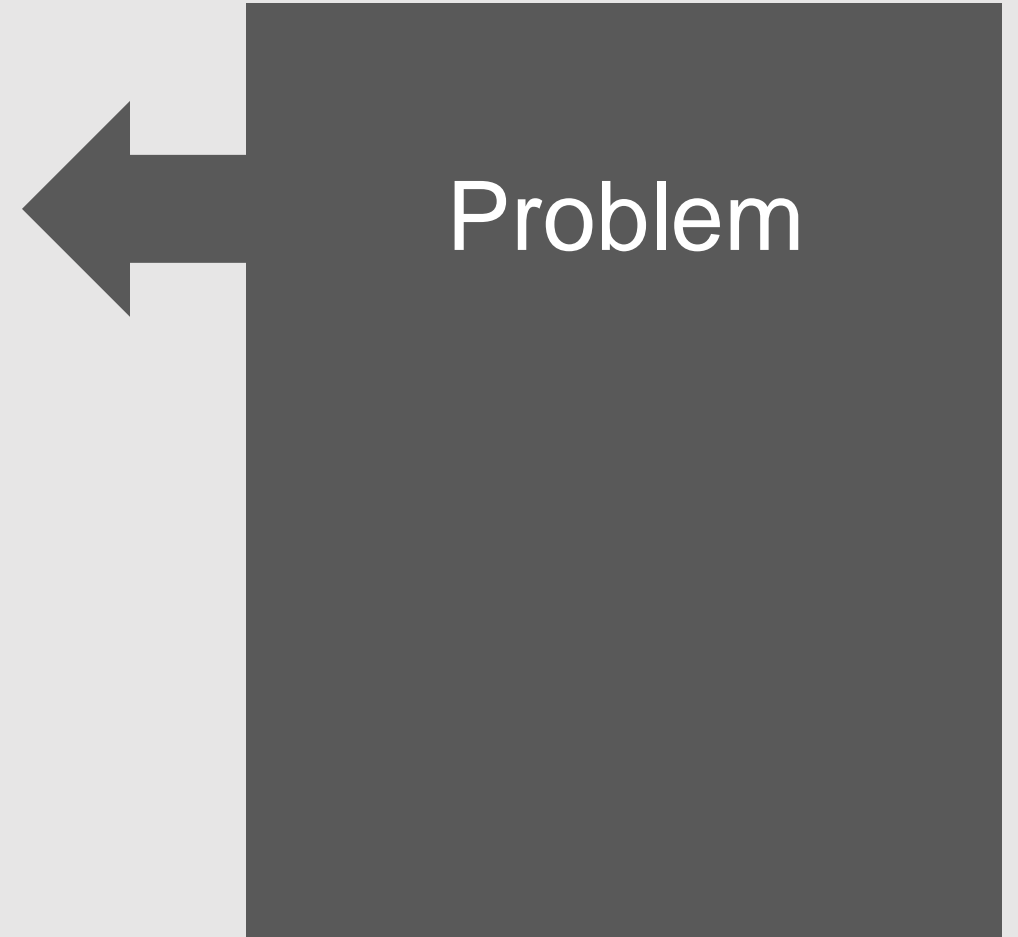
Stamm, B.H. (2010). The Concise ProQOL Manual, 2nd Ed. Pocatello, ID: ProQOL.org.

## Need?

1. Maintain or gain PCU RNs' positive professional QOL &
2. Ameliorate negative professional QOL

## Proposed intervention:

Compassion Rounds (CR): Facilitated, open-ended group meetings for RNs about specific challenges & rewards of their helper role



## **Purpose:**

To determine whether weekly CR supports professional QOL among PCU RNs

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## **Hypothesis**

Compassion Rounds (CR) will improve compassion satisfaction and reduce compassion fatigue among PCU RNs.



**Purpose  
&  
Hypothesis**

## Design

- Quasi-experimental, Pretest/Posttest & RNs as their own control group

## Sample

- Inclusive, convenience sample of 84 staff RNs

## Setting

- PCU in a 377-bed, Magnet<sup>®</sup>, southern California non-profit facility

## METHODS

- \* Design
- \* Sample
- \* Setting

## Compassion Rounds (CR)

- Biweekly, 30-45 minute, daytime CR huddles
- Facilitated by Palliative &/or Spiritual Care leaders.
- Simultaneous RN CR attendance was live & online

## METHODS (cont.)

\* Intervention

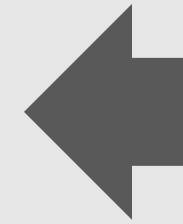


**1. ProQOL** – a 30-item, paper-&-pencil, self-report tool that yields 3 ordinal-level subscale scores:

- Compassion satisfaction (CS)
- Burnout (BO)
- Secondary traumatic stress (STS)

**2. Demographic sheet** – to describe respondents

Questionnaires were coded for confidential pre/post paired analysis.



## METHODS (cont.)

\* Instruments

After IRB approval,

- 3 weeks of Pre-CR data collection:  
Coded, confidential questionnaires  
distributed & returned in unmarked  
envelopes.
- 10 weeks of biweekly, facilitated CR
- 3 weeks Post-CR data collection



## METHODS (cont.)

\* Procedures

**Response rate = 44% (N=39)**

**CR Attendance = 18 attended 1-10 times (Mean = 3 times)**

## **Demographics**

Ethnically diverse. Mean age =35. 89% identified as female. 75% were BSN-prepared. 26% reported specialty certification

## **RESULTS**

**\*Demographics**

## Paired ProQOL scores (n = 10)

- Paired *t* test
- *Compassion Satisfaction* decreased after CR  $t(8) = 3.7, p = .005$
- *Burnout* was higher after CR  $t(8) = -2.3, p = .05$
- *Secondary Traumatic Stress* was higher after CR  $t(8) = -3.5, p = .008$

## Unpaired ProQOL scores (n = )

- Unpaired *t* test
- Similar significant results ( $p \leq .05$ )

## RESULTS

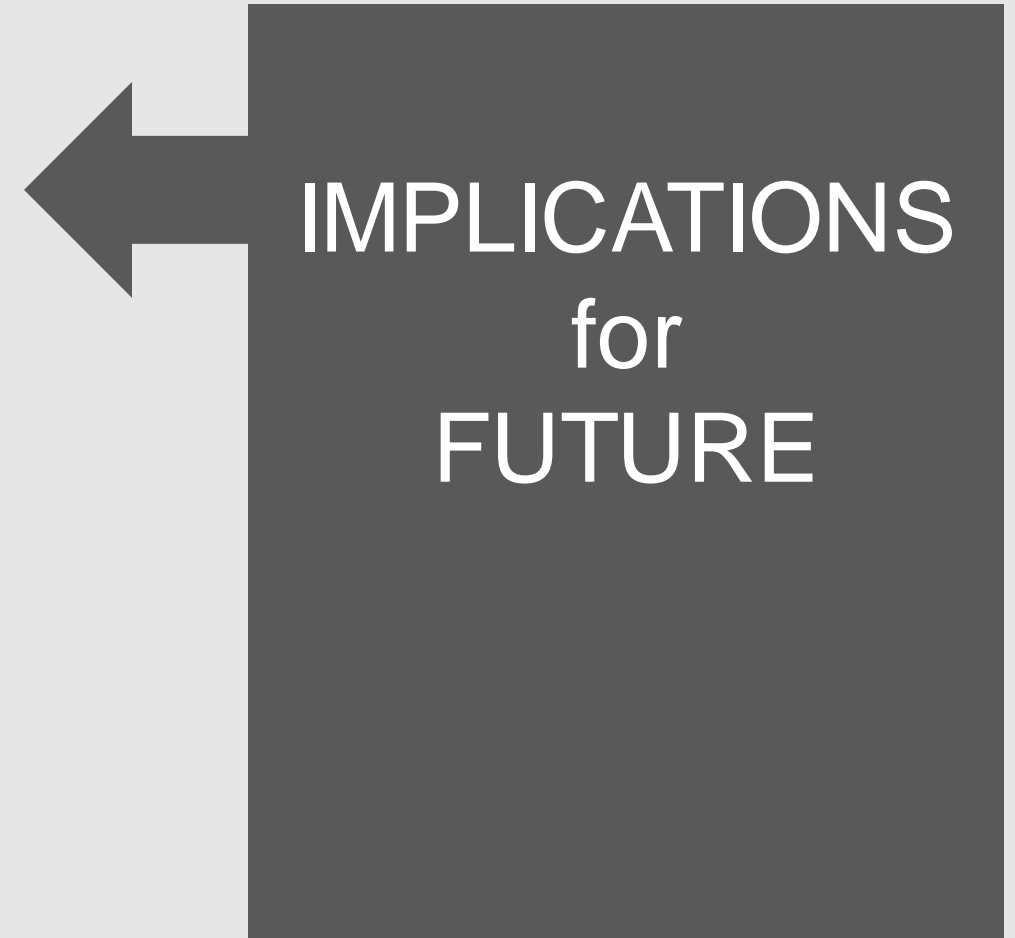
\* Hypothesis rejected

1. ProQOL is screening tool; interpret results with caution
2. During study PCU was a COVID-19 unit. Data collection & CR occurred during peak hospitalizations
3. Professional QOL deteriorated, but we have no counterfactual. Results without CR could have been worse.
4. RN completion of ProQOL & only 10 weeks of CR might have been long enough to raise issues without enough time to resolve them



## DISCUSSION & CONCLUSIONS

- Need for staff-identified strategies for empowerment
- Attend to individuals at risk for burnout & secondary traumatic stress
- ProQOL is free online as resource for career counseling
- Consider a post-pandemic ProQOL measure to identify whether trends are resolving. Collecting concurrent qualitative data could offer in-depth insights



# Key References

1. Stamm, B.H. (2010). The Concise ProQOL Manual, 2nd Ed. Pocatello, ID: ProQOL.org.
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